

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 070734
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON,JR.
APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON,JR.
S/S-O:RCASTRODALE
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 070734

NODIS
FOR CHARGE FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, IS, LE

SUBJECT: ISRAELI COMMANDO ATTACK ON VEHICLES NORTH OF LITANI

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH BAR-ON MARCH 18, I TOLD HIM THE SECRETARY HAD ASKED THAT I CONVEY THE FOLLOWING. IT HAD BEEN OUR UNDERSTANDING AS A RESULT OF EARLIER EX-CHANGES WITH ISRAELIS THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER ISRAELI MILITARY ACTION NORTH OF LITANI RIVER. INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US INDICATED THAT THERE HAD IN FACT BEEN A COMMANDO ATTACK ON TWO VEHICLES ON COAST ROAD NEAR ADLUM THE NIGHT OF MARCH 16-17, IN WHICH ONE PALESTINIAN LEADER BUT ALSO A NUMBER OF CIVILIANS HAD BEEN KILLED. THIS ACTION PUT US AND THE SECRETARY PERSONALLY IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION WHEN WE HAVE BEEN TELLING OTHERS, ON THE STRENGTH OF WHAT WE HAD UNDERSTOOD FROM ISRAELIS, THAT MILITARY ACTIONS NORTH OF LITANI HAD CEASED.

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2. BAR-ON SAID THAT ISRAELI EMBASSY HAD NO DETAILS ABOUT MILITARY SITUATION BUT UNDERTOOK TO REPORT THE FOREGOING TO JERUSALEM.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, COMBAT OPERATIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE070734
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ALATHERTON,JR.
Enclosure: FOR CHARGE FROM ATHERTON
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840176-1268, N780003-0573
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780350/aaaabpwu.tel
Line Count: 60
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 178d7cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3278122
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI COMMANDO ATTACK ON VEHICLES NORTH OF LITANI
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, IS, LE, US
To: TEL AVIV
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/178d7cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014